

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6272

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to expand the eligibility of students to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 14, 2021

Mr. LAWSON of Florida (for himself, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACOBS of California, Ms. MENG, Ms. BASS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. McGOVERN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TRONE, Mr. BOWMAN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. DEAN, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. KILMER, Mr. GALLEGOS, Ms. BUSH, Mr. CORREA, Mr. EVANS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CRIST, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. JONES, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mrs. HAYES) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to expand the eligibility of students to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the “College Student Hun-
3 ger Act of 2021”.

4 SEC. 2. ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE

**SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM.**

7 (a) DEFINITION OF HOUSEHOLD.—Section 3(m) of
8 the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(m))
9 is amended—

15 “(F) Students that are enrolled in and are
16 residents of an institution of higher education
17 (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Edu-
18 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) and are
19 eligible to participate in the supplemental nutri-
20 tion assistance program under paragraphs (1)
21 through (11) of section 6(e).”.

22 (b) ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS.—Section 6(e) of the
23 Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(e)) is
24 amended—

25 (1) in paragraph (4), by striking “20” and in-
26 serting “10”;

1 (2) in paragraph (7), by striking “or” at the
2 end;

3 (3) in paragraph (8), by striking the period at
4 the end and inserting a semicolon; and

5 (4) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(9) is eligible for a Federal Pell Grant under
7 section 401 of the Higher Education Act of 1965
8 (20 U.S.C. 1070a);

9 “(10) has an expected family contribution equal
10 to zero, as determined by the procedures established
11 in part F of title IV of the Higher Education Act
12 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087kk et seq.); or

13 “(11) is independent (as the term is defined
14 under subparagraph (B), (C), (D), (G), or (H) of
15 section 480(d)(1) of the Higher Education Act (20
16 U.S.C. 1087vv(d)(1))).”.

17 **SEC. 3. COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION ON STUDENT
18 ELIGIBILITY FOR THE SUPPLEMENTAL NU-
19 TRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

20 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

21 (1) COLLEGE STUDENT.—The term “college
22 student” means a student enrolled in an institution
23 of higher education.

24 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
25 term “institution of higher education” has the

1 meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher
2 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

3 (3) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means
4 the supplemental nutrition assistance program es-
5 tablished under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008
6 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

7 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
8 the Secretary of Agriculture.

9 (b) STRATEGIES REPORT.—180 days after the effec-
10 tive date of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Con-
11 gress a report that describes the strategy to be used—

12 (1) to increase the awareness of State agencies
13 and institutions of higher education about—

14 (A) college student hunger;
15 (B) the eligibility of college students for
16 the program; and

17 (C) the procedures and resources available
18 to college students who are participating in the
19 program to access benefits under the program;

20 (2) to identify existing or potential barriers and
21 mitigation strategies with respect to those barriers;
22 and

23 (3) to update the strategic communications plan
24 under subsection (c).

1 (c) UPDATED STATE OUTREACH PLAN GUIDANCE.—
2 Not later than 90 days after the Secretary submits to Con-
3 gress a report under subsection (b), the Secretary shall
4 publish an updated State Outreach Plan Guidance that—
5 (1) describes existing data on college student
6 hunger;
7 (2) describes the manner in which college stu-
8 dents can access the supplemental nutrition assist-
9 ance program;
10 (3) recommends outreach activities to address
11 college student hunger and encourages States to
12 conduct those and other outreach activities;
13 (4) provides a template for a State to submit
14 information to the Secretary describing the outreach
15 activities being carried out by the State to address
16 college student hunger; and
17 (5) contains updated guidance based on the
18 content of such report.

19 **SEC. 4. DEMONSTRATION PILOT PROGRAM.**

20 The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011
21 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

22 **“SEC. 31. COLLEGE STUDENT HUNGER PILOT PROGRAM.**

23 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 “(1) COLLEGE STUDENT.—The term ‘college
2 student’ means a student enrolled in an institution
3 of higher education.

4 “(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
5 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
6 meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher
7 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

8 “(3) PILOT PROGRAM.—The term ‘pilot pro-
9 gram’ means the pilot program established under
10 subsection (b).

11 “(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collabora-
12 tion with the Secretary of Education, shall establish a pilot
13 program under which the Secretary shall carry out dem-
14 onstration projects in accordance with subsection (c)—

15 “(1) to decrease student hunger at institutions
16 of higher education; and

17 “(2) to reduce barriers to college students fully
18 utilizing supplemental nutrition assistance program
19 benefits at institutions of higher education.

20 “(c) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—To carry out the
21 pilot program, the Secretary shall carry out demonstration
22 projects that test the following new supplemental nutrition
23 assistance program delivery methods:

24 “(1) Allowing a college student receiving sup-
25 plemental nutrition assistance program benefits to

1 use those benefits or the cash value of those bene-
2 fits—

3 “(A) to purchase prepared foods from a
4 campus dining hall, on-campus store, or other
5 on-campus merchant or provider that typically
6 sells prepared meals and is affiliated with the
7 institution of higher education at which the stu-
8 dent is enrolled; and

9 “(B) to pay the institution of higher edu-
10 cation the cost of an on-campus college meal
11 plan, in whole or in part.

12 “(2) Allowing a college student to use an EBT
13 card or a campus-specific card at any of the loca-
14 tions described in paragraph (1)(A).

15 “(d) PROJECT LIMIT.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry
17 out not more than 10 demonstration projects under
18 the pilot program simultaneously.

19 “(2) INSTITUTIONS.—The Secretary shall carry
20 out not more than 1 demonstration project under
21 the pilot program at any single institution of higher
22 education.

23 “(e) PROJECT ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
24 shall establish criteria and parameters for selecting, oper-

1 ating, monitoring, and terminating each demonstration
2 project under the pilot program.

3 “(f) PROJECT TERMINATION.—To the maximum ex-
4 tent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that the termi-
5 nation of a demonstration project under the pilot program
6 shall not cause sudden adverse changes or the elimination
7 of benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance
8 program for students participating in the demonstration
9 project.

10 “(g) PROGRAM TERMINATION.—The pilot program
11 shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date
12 on which the pilot program is established.

13 “(h) EVALUATION.—For the duration of the pilot
14 program, the Secretary shall, in collaboration with the
15 Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics
16 and the Director of the Institute of Education Sciences,
17 conduct an annual evaluation of each demonstration
18 project carried out under the pilot program during the
19 year covered by the evaluation, including an analysis of
20 the extent to which the project is meeting the desired out-
21 comes.

22 “(i) REPORT.—For the duration of the pilot program,
23 the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Agri-
24 culture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Health, Education,
25 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committees

1 on Agriculture and Education and Labor of the House of
2 Representatives an annual report that includes—

3 “(1) a description of each demonstration project
4 carried out under the pilot program during the year
5 covered by the report;

6 “(2) the evaluation conducted under subsection
7 (h); and

8 “(3) recommendations for legislation to improve
9 the supplemental nutrition assistance program to
10 better serve college students.

11 “(j) WAIVER AND MODIFICATION AUTHORITY.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
13 the Secretary may, as may be necessary solely to
14 carry out the pilot program—

15 “(A) waive any provision under this Act,
16 including—

17 “(i) the requirement relating to local
18 sales tax under section 4(a);

19 “(ii) requirements relating to the
20 issuance and use of supplemental nutrition
21 assistance program benefits under section
22 7; and

23 “(iii) requirements for approval of re-
24 tail food stores under section 9; and

1 “(B) modify the definitions under this Act
2 for the purposes of the pilot program, including
3 the definition of—

4 “(i) the term ‘food’ under section
5 3(k);

6 “(ii) the term ‘household’ under sec-
7 tion 3(m); and

8 “(iii) the term ‘retail food store’ under
9 section 3(o).

10 “(2) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not
11 waive a provision or modify a definition under para-
12 graph (1) if the waiver or modification will—

13 “(A) cause increased difficulty for any
14 household to apply for or access supplemental
15 nutrition assistance program benefits; or

16 “(B) reduce the value of those benefits for
17 any household.

18 “(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such
20 sums as are necessary to carry out this section.”.

21 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

22 This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall
23 take effect on the first day of the fiscal year that begins
24 after the date of enactment of this Act.

